

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
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BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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Visit to the “Salus Populi Romani” in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, Act of veneration of Mary Immaculate in Piazza di Spagna and Homage to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in the Basilica of Sant’Andrea delle Fratte

At 15.20 today, feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Father Francis went to the Basilica of Saint Mary Major to pray before the image of the “Salus Populi Romani”.

The Pope then proceeded to Piazza di Spagna for the traditional Act of veneration of Mary Immaculate.

Before returning to the Vatican, the Holy Father entered the Basilica of Sant’Andrea delle Fratte to pay homage to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

The following is the prayer that the Holy Father composed for the event, recited during the Act of veneration of Mary Immaculate in Piazza di Spagna.

Prayer of the Holy Father

Immaculate Mother,

For the fifth time I come to your feet as Bishop of Rome,
to pay you homage on behalf of all the inhabitants of this city.

We want to thank you for the constant care
with which you accompany us on our journey,
the journey of families, parishes, religious communities;
the journey of those who daily, and sometimes with difficulty,
pass through Rome on their way to work;
the journey of the sick, the elderly, the poor,

the journey of so many people who immigrated here from places where there is war and hunger.

Thank you, because as soon as we turn our thoughts,
or a fleeting glance, towards you,
or recite a quick Hail Mary,
we feel your maternal presence, tender and strong.

O Mother, help this city develop the "antibodies" it needs
to combat some of the viruses of our times:
the indifference that says: "It's not my business";
the unsociable behaviour that despises the common good;
the fear of the foreigner and those who are different from us;
the conformism that disguises itself as transgression;
the hypocrisy that accuses others while doing the same things;
the resignation to environmental and ethical degradation;
the exploitation of so many men and women.

Help us to reject these and other viruses
with the antibodies that come from the Gospel.
Let us make it a good habit
to read a passage from the Gospel every day
and, following your example, to keep the Word of God in our hearts,
so that, like a good seed, it may fruit in our lives.

Immaculate Virgin,

175 years ago, not far from here,
in the church of *Sant'Andrea delle Fratte*,
you touched the heart of Alphonse Ratisbonne, who at that moment,
from being an atheist and enemy of the Church, became a Christian.

You revealed yourself to him as a Mother of grace and mercy.
Grant that we too, especially in times of trial and temptation,
may fix our gaze on your open hands,
hands that allow the Lord's graces to fall upon the earth.
Help us to rid ourselves of all pride and arrogance,
and to recognize ourselves for what we really are:
small and poor sinners, but always your children.

So, let us place our hand in yours
And allow ourselves to be led back to Jesus, our Brother and Saviour,
and to our Heavenly Father, who never tires of waiting for us
and forgiving us when we return to Him.

Thank you, Mother, for always listening to us!
Bless the Church that is in Rome.
Bless this City and the whole world.

Amen.
